

BABY STATE

Growing and Prospering At Lively Rate.

Frankfort Man Writes Of Oklahoma.

Chief of Police Has Long Record With Gun.

ENFORCES LETTER OF LAW STRICTLY.

The following letter is from a Frankfort man who has gone to Oklahoma to live. He writes interestingly of the new State and its progress.

Muskogee, Okla., April 25, '08.
Editor Frankfort News:—

April 22, 1889, nineteen years ago, last Wednesday, witnessed the birth of Oklahoma. The growth of the country since then has been one of the marvels of the century, surpassing in the growth of any State in the Union in the same length of time. In nineteen years Oklahoma has accomplished more than many of the much older States have achieved in a century. It has been a long, hard struggle, which has conquered the vast wilderness of prairie and today the new State stands on the threshold of a further awakening that will startle the entire world. Nineteen years ago the pioneers rushed into the new country which today is typified as one of the most cosmopolitan in the Union. The baby State is indeed a husky youngster and when full grown will make every Commonwealth in the sisterhood of States take notice.

In these nineteen years great cities have been mapped out and built up, and they are still speeding on with marvelous rapidity. The indications are for a bumper fruit and crop year, and the influx of immigration into Oklahoma promises to be greater this year than in any year in her history.

The Constitution of the State, pronounced by William J. Bryan to be the greatest Constitution ever written, not even excepting the United States Constitution, certainly looks good to the people in the new State. The corporations and trusts said they would have to leave the State; many of the banks said that the "guaranty law" would put them out of business, but the railroads are running just the same and the banks are still doing business at the same old stands, with others being constantly organized with increased capital stocks. The fact that the State of Oklahoma stands back of these institutions seems to have appealed to the people, and many people living outside the Commonwealth keep their deposits in Oklahoma banks. The law is popular here and the people believe in it.

You find a thrift an enterprise here that one seldom sees any where, not even in other young States and territories. The habit of work seems infectious and men, women and children are helpers and "bread winners" here. The State officials, without exception, at Guthrie, reach their offices at eight o'clock, work the same as the clerical force and often you can see them far into the night looking after the business of the State. Even the Governor of the State, with his multitudinous other duties, looks much after details and his capacity for work seems unlimited.

The State Dispensary, styled by some people the "State Saloon," was tried to be looked at as a great joke. It was said that it would prove a failure and that whisky and other intoxicating liquors would be bought and sold the same as ever. This might have been true in other States but no so here. The officers seem to put a very high value on their oath of office and the men elected discharge their various duties without fear and without favor.

While there may be and doubtless are to be found boot leggers and blind tigers it is reduced to the minimum and the sales of whisky are very limited. You will see very little drunkenness here, and when you do see a man drunk its not very long before you will see a policeman taking him along to the lock-up. They started the "clubs" and various "purely social organizations" in the cities of the State, but they would not work and the officials very promptly arrested the men in charge and confiscated the whisky, wines and the beer.

When I came here, little more than

a month ago, beer could be had at a number of places and whisky in almost every block in town. This is all over now. All of the "joints" have been closed and the sign "there is nothing doing" can be seen on the front doors. And it's the same with the gamblers, the vagrants and the other people termed here "undesirable citizens." They play no favorites and they all look alike to "Bud," meaning Bud Ledbetter, the Muskogee Chief of Police.

He was elected on his record and is the only Democratic candidate on the ticket who pulled through. He made this record while a deputy marshal under Marshal Leo E. Bennett, during the federal regime in Indian Territory. In the city election his own chief, the Republican ticket, and Ledbetter was a candidate on the opposition ticket.

The result of his election was one of the greatest tributes ever paid to a man in the new country. On the day of election there were twenty-five saloons running in Muskogee and nearly as many gambling houses. Every one of these closed and to a man the saloon and gambling element, perfectly organized and with a barrel of money, went to the polls and fought Ledbetter all day long. It was announced the next morning that Ledbetter had been elected by a very close margin. The saloons and gambling houses immediately closed their doors and have not been opened since. They knew that it meant a fight with Ledbetter, and they knew what the result would be, and they quit before a fight was necessary.

He is 44 years old and has been an officer almost since he was old enough to vote.

For eight years he was a deputy sheriff in Western Arkansas. Then he came to Indian Territory and was for ten years a deputy under Marshal Bennett. Two years he was chief of police in Vinita. During the last three years under Bennett he confiscated and destroyed over \$80,000 worth of liquor illegally shipped into the territory.

Ledbetter has many notches on his gun, but just how many no one is able to tell. When he is asked he replies that he does not like to talk about such things. The only way to get the details of a killing in which he took part is to get him started talking about the fight and let him run on. When he gets up to the point where he had to kill his man he stops. A serious sadness comes into his eyes and nothing can induce him to go further. Men who have long been in the same service say that he has laid at least a dozen men low, and he never received a scratch in all these desperate fights. He added two more men to his list in Muskogee about a year ago when he walked right up to a house in which rioters were fortified and killed two men on the porch after they had opened fire on him. This probably makes fourteen men he has killed, and he never started a fight until it was absolutely necessary and he never shot a man in his life until it became a question of self-defense.

His fearlessness makes even outlaws respect him, and he seems to have a sort of second sight for criminals. He is a man of powerful physique, over six feet tall and weighs 200 pounds. He walks with a limp, the result of a broken leg which he got while chasing a criminal in Vinita. With a six-shooter he can hit a target the size of a man's head at 100 yards every shot, and there is not a better shot with a Winchester in Oklahoma. He never made but one speech during his campaign and that was this: "Gentlemen, if you elect me I will enforce the law." The men who wanted the law enforced knew he would do it, and those who did not want it did not consider it safe to experiment.

Muskogee has about thirty thousand citizens and more coming in on every train. You can see the town grow. You can see new buildings going up on every block in every part of the city. New streets are being built, new paving put down and dozens of business houses and hundreds of dwelling houses being erected for miles around.

With all this the town is crowded. You can not find an empty business house in the city; dwelling houses have to be watched and almost "squeezed" on to secure them, and rooms are high priced and in great demand. However the people here are thoroughly alive to the situation and with all haste possible they are arranging accommodations for all who are here and all who come in the months to follow.

You find many Kentuckians here, as you find them in every county and every clime. Most of them are doing well and all of them delighted with the country. The climate is fine, the waters here as good as can be found anywhere in the world, said not to be true of some other Oklahoma cities, and there is work of some kind or another for all who care to look for it.

B. W.

KNIGHTS OF FOREST

Will Have Branch of Supreme Lodge

FRATERNAL ORDER EXHIBIT DO GOOD WORK IN FIELD.

A branch of the Supreme Knights of the Forest of the United States, established in Frankfort, a regular office has been opened here. A local court will be organized within the next few weeks and it is expected that a large number of members will be initiated. Frankfort is the headquarters for this organization in the state, as well as women, and same rights and privileges are accorded to the men. The officers of the order are open to all citizens of Frankfort.

The Knights of the Forest is a purely a beneficial and benevolent organization. It is free from sectarian prejudices, and unhampered by any domination of sect or party. It is thoroughly American in spirit and in its tone and is guided by common sense. Its permanency is fully established, and the outlook for its future is good, it is said.

The purposes of the organization, with others, are: The mutual protection and assistance of its members in sickness and distress; the burial of members and members' wives, and the relief of relatives left unprovided for by decease of members.

The order of the Supreme Knights of the Forest is a fraternity, whose members are linked together by those bonds of brotherhood so greatly exemplified in Masonry, Odd Fellowship, Knights of Pythias and kindred societies.

In behalf of home and country this society has enlisted in the ranks of the Grand Fraternal Army of America, to valiantly do its part in alleviating the sufferings of man; to aid the unfortunate; relieve the distressed; watch over the sick, and perform the sad rites at the grave of a brother.

Nothing of a sectarian or political character will be permitted within its portals. Its obligations in no way conflict with any religious creed, while they teach obedience to law, and loyalty to government.

SEVERE TEST

Will Be Given American Battleship Fleet.

JOURNEY WILL COVER 42,500 MILES—RETURN IN FEBRUARY.

A total of approximately 42,500 miles will have been covered by the Atlantic battleship fleet when it arrives at Hampton Roads on February 22 next, according to the estimates made by the naval officials. The distance to be covered, according to an itinerary for the voyage of the fleet from San Francisco to the Philippines and thence to China and Japan and back to Manila is 16,218 miles.

The longest lap of this distance is that from Honolulu to Auckland, 3,840 miles, said by naval officials to be the greatest steaming distance ever made by a battleship fleet in the American navy without stopping for coal.

This will require slightly over sixteen days. One of the colliers and two of the supply ships will stop at Samoa for coal and the battleship Illinois, which under ordinary circumstances can not carry enough fuel to steam our thousand miles, will store some coal in bags on deck and also take fuel in her fire room. Regular coal supplies will be taken aboard at various stopping places when same is needed.

According to this itinerary the fleet will leave San Francisco July 7, arrive at Honolulu July 16, remain for seven days; arrive at Auckland August 9, remain six days; arrive at Sydney August 20, remain seven days; arrive at Melbourne August 29, remain seven days; arrive at Albany, Australia (for coal), September 11, remain six days; arrive at Philippines October 1, remain nine days; arrive at Yokohama October 17, remain seven days. (At Yokohama the fleet will be divided, the first squadron going to Manila and scheduled to reach there October 31. The second squadron will go to Amoy, reaching there October 29, and after a stay of six days will go to Manila, reaching there November 7th.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

DEMOCRATIC CLUB.

NEW ORGANIZATION TO FIGHT ITS NOMINEES AT NEXT ELECTION.

Democrats of Franklin county have formed what is called the Franklin County Democratic Club, and a determined effort will be made to carry this county for the next presidential candidate. The club will work for the Young Men's Democratic Club, and will be appointed to the campaign work. The club is working in conjunction with the Young Men's Democratic Club, and will be the banner Democratic county in the State.

The new club was formed at a mass meeting held Tuesday night at the courthouse when about one hundred Democrats from the city and county were present.

The interest shown was great and augurs well for the next Democratic ticket. The men who formed the new club are good workers and know how to get out the votes.

The following officers were elected: Scott Brown, President; John W. Ray, Vice President; Robinson Farmer, Secretary. The following conference committee was named to meet with the Young Men's Democratic Club: R. L. Greene, Robinson Farmer, John W. Ray, Thomas W. Scott and A. Brawner.

The club begins with a membership of 382 and another meeting will be held soon when it is expected that many new members will be admitted.

Another meeting of the club will be held Monday night, when several distinguished Democrats will address it.

PLEADS GUILTY.

ALVIN SEEKAMP ASSESSED PRICE OF \$1,000.

Indicted on Charge of Libeling Former Governor Beckham.

Alvin Seekamp, of Louisville, who was the editor and publisher of a weekly paper called "The Criterion," entered a plea of guilty in the Franklin Circuit Court on Thursday and accepted a fine of \$1,000 on an indictment charging him with criminal libel. The fine was paid and Mr. Seekamp was released from custody. The paper has suspended publication and will not be resumed. The libelous article, which caused the indictment, was copied from a St. Louis paper and was an attack on former Governor J. C. W. Beckham. The article was untrue and Seekamp admitted that it was not true in a statement which he signed before he was allowed to escape with a fine of \$1,000. In his statement, Seekamp, who is only nineteen years old, says that he was furnished a copy of the St. Louis paper which contained the article, by A. Aronson, a reporter for a Louisville newspaper. He says Aronson suggested that the publication of the article would make good reading for Louisville and Kentucky, and acting on this, he published the article. He says he investigated the charges made in that article and now finds that they were untrue in every respect.

Kentucky Boy Will

Ride In England.

LUCIEN LYNE WILL HAVE MOUNTS FOR RICHARD CROKER THIS YEAR.

Sandford Lyne, of Fayette county, and the father of Lucien Lyne, the noted jockey, received word from his son that he latter has been engaged to ride the horses of Richard Croker, in England, this season. This means that Lucien will have the leg up in the two classic events, the Thousand Guineas and the Oaks, two of the oldest turf events in the world. He will probably pilot the great Orby, which won the English Derby at Epsom Downs last year, in the Thousand Guineas, while the fleet filly, Rhodora, will be Croaker's representative in the Oaks.

Wanted—One thousand foxes Will pay \$1.50 apiece, and will pay cash. You can either draw on me or send bill and I will remit promptly. J. D. Stodghill, Shelbyville, Ky. 4t.



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